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Nation

Nation 20 1993-2013 flashback

Back to School

Spence Re-elected

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Values? More like a crass election strategy

by Lyle Stewart

Living in Montreal, I've often gazed up the defining geographical feature of this city, Mount Royal, and wondered why in this day and age it should be topped by an illuminated Christian cross that is paid for by all residents here, no matter our religious faith or lack thereof.

This attitude should, on the surface, make me sympathetic to the controversial "Charter of Quebec Values" recently proposed by the minority Parti Québécois government. It is being promoted as a way to present Quebec as a secular state. In practice, by legislating unworkable rules on what clothing or jewellery a person employed by Quebec's public entities may wear, it is a discriminatory barrier against minorities.

While we have yet to see the actual language of the proposed law, judiciously placed media leaks say it would forbid any display by a public employee of a personal item that would denote a person's religious affiliation. It's transparently designed to play on fears of and prejudice toward minorities in Quebec.

In rural areas and the Quebec City region, where the PQ needs to win the seats that would give it a majority, these attitudes run deep, fuelled by ranting talk-radio hosts spewing racist sewage over the airwaves.

It's clearly illegal and unconstitutional, and will never come to pass. No matter: the damage will be done, and for the worst reasons.

Trailing in the polls and facing defeat in the National Assembly in the coming months, the PQ is desperate to find a wedge issue that will return the party to power after the next election. It is appealing to the most ignorant among us in order to whip up fear of a threat that doesn't exist.

It has chosen to join the incoherent roar of intolerance constantly blaring out from the megaphone of the Quebecor media empire owned by Pierre Karl Péladeau. Péladeau, recently appointed by Premier Pauline Marois to chair the board of Hydro-Québec, returned the favour by commissioning a poll that shows a majority of Quebecers support this xenophobic law.

The poll, conducted by the respected firm Léger Marketing, is revealing. Not surprisingly, attitudes are sharply split according to one's mother tongue, with the numbers almost exactly reversed.

Almost two of every three francophones (65%) support a "Charter of Quebec Values," with only 20% opposed. Among anglophones, only 25% support the proposed charter, while 62% oppose it.

The most telling finding, however, is that while a majority of francophones oppose visible religious symbols of government employees, they also find it perfectly acceptable to display the crucifix in Quebec's National Assembly. Its presence there is a clear sign that Quebec presents itself as a Christian state. Not very secular, that.

Nor, I suspect, would these same people demand the removal of a lapel pin of the Quebec flag from our police, politicians or judges, not to mention from official vehicles and buildings. This law would make it necessary, however. The white cross separating the four fleurs-de-lis was explicitly designed to represent Christianity.

It's a farce. But the divisions this PQ gambit will create are very serious. Nor do they pay any attention to the reality of French immigration to this land. As former Nation journalist Steve Bonspiel noted on his Facebook page, ex-Premier Bernard Landry argued that, "integration is a powerful signal that [immigrants] need to adjust to a new nation." Bonspiel sarcastically replied, "Seems the French, English didn't get the memo here."

With glee, I await the day a government bureaucrat tries to tell a First Nations chief that he must remove a feather headdress because an eagle feather is viewed as sacred.

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Sabtuan student Hope Grant

photo courtesy of Sabtuan

Blueberry fields forever

by Sonny Orr

Recently, a cousin of mine appeared as a guest speaker at a conference in Whapmagoostui. Having known him as a young man, the encounter made me realize how quickly time flies. His greying hair reminded me that my own hair, which is turning transparent, and really didn't match our youthful enthusiasm. Only the expressions were slightly altered, my cool was his awesome, so to speak. While we rehashed the past, we quickly moved on to the present and possible future of our lives.

What are we to do about these seemingly endless problems that always slap us in the face? What are the cures and solutions? After pondering and mulling our world, he left with his travelling companion. This person is dedicated to regaining the values we always heard our grandparents talk about. Cuzzie remarked that coming up north reminded him of the good old days when sharing and friendliness were the rewards for the back-breaking work we had to do just to get by. These strong values, which were coupled with honest work, made a person strong yet courteous. Aahh, those days were good (which also means cool or awesome).

Now, some values are hell-bent on driving completely off the path that our ancestors stuck to for so long. Today, that path is dangerously close to becoming completely overgrown by the bushes and weeds of selfishness. Our spirituality and medicines were good. Our lives, although somewhat treacherous and rife with starvation, residential schools syndrome, alcoholism and substance abuse, made us stronger in many ways. Sometimes the most memorable times in life are those that we don't care to remember.

Having rehashed all of those issues and bad memories, I invited Cuzzie and his travelling partner to come out to our family picnic further north on the coast of Hudson Bay. A few hours later, Cuzzie showed up, and his amazed guffaws reverberated around our little picnic area.

"Wow, this country's beautiful!" he exclaimed, looking around my small paradise. My lovely partner offered him some fresh cooked geese, killed earlier that day. "Mmmfff, mufffmmm, yum," he choked out, meat spewing from his jaws. Apparently, this meant, "We eat like kings!"

I had the pleasure of disappearing out on the land to pick some blueberries to complement the fish on the boil. I invited Cuzzie to accompany me on my short expedition. Shortly, we noticed geese swimming around on a small pond. We set up a strategy to kill these beautiful birds, but alas, they flew off. Undaunted, we continued on to blueberry fields. We settled on a bountiful bush and talked about the good old days again. This time, it was about the funny days and we laughed until snot spewed from our noses.

Heading back to the picnic, we quickly incorporated the berries into the fish bowl. Again, Cuzzie spoke with his mouth full, this time a little more pronounced. Yes, he did call me a King, so I suppose that he would be one of my subjects. Then I remembered we still live in a free country. Maybe one day he will bow down to me. Forwards or backwards, I'm still the King living in blueberry fields forever.

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The chief re-elected

Theresa Spence wins second term in Attawapiskat

by Jeremy East

Nationally celebrated Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence won a second term to lead her embattled community in elections last month. But Spence, who galvanized the country, gained massive media coverage and helped create a movement during her six-week hunger strike last winter, nonetheless won only 42% of the 507 votes cast in a four-person race.

Still, Spence expressed gratitude towards her supporters in the community and is focussing on the work ahead.

"The numbers don't bother me, I'm happy to have the support I have in the community," said Spence. "There are a lot of people saying we're going to do this together and that's what we'll do. It will be a challenging three years but I'm very excited and hoping I don't get too many gray hairs," she laughed.

Spence's advantages as incumbent and a national figure didn't mask the reality that, on the ground, little has changed in Attawapiskat. Ongoing financial transparency issues also supplied ammunition to her election opponents in an often-hostile contest. A 2011 Deloitte audit revealed that, since 2005, only 20% of the band's expenses were properly documented. Under Spence's administration beginning in 2010, that rate improved to 33%. Still, other candidates argued that more improvements were needed, starting with increased communication between leadership and the local residents.

"There has been a lack of communication issue with the community as a whole," said election candidate Bruce Shisheesh. "The chief didn't consult the community on a number of issues, one example being her hunger strike. She didn't tell anyone what was happening and the next thing we knew she was in Ottawa for six weeks."

Although the community continues to struggle with infrastructure problems, Spence is looking forward to the benefits she expects will flow from prospective revenue-sharing opportunities. In this, all four candidates supported improving relations with both government and the private sector.

Other challengers in the election included band councillor Christine Kataquapit, who replaced Spence as interim chief during the hunger strike, and Conrad Ihatail.

Prior to the August 27 election, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples National Chief Betty Ann Lavallée called on Attawapiskat to postpone balloting since off-reserve band members are barred from voting outside the community. Almost half (43%) of Attawapiskat's registered population of 3,472 currently resides off-reserve, meaning these band members were unable to vote unless they returned home.

In her recommendation, Lavallée cited a 1999 Supreme Court ruling,

which found that all elections held under the Indian Act must extend voting rights to those living off reserve. Many First Nations in Canada have yet to adapt to the 14-year-old Supreme Court decision, she noted.

Attawapiskat rejected propositions for a remote balloting system three years ago. Spence says she is open to revisiting the issue, but warns that the policies cannot be instituted overnight.

"Leadership alone is being blamed for this balloting, but the community members need to come forward and be a part of the process," said Spence, adding that a working group would be established to ensure wide participation in overhauling the community's election code.

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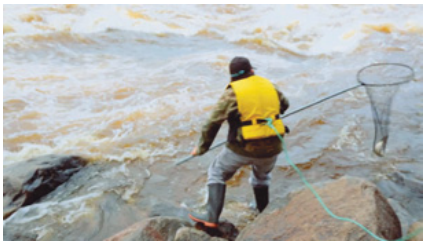


Many environmental follow-up activities are about cisco, a fish species highly valued by the Cree community of Waskaganish. Filmed at Smokey Hill, this video allows us to experience dip-net fishing with two Waskaganish residents, Ricky Weistche and his son, Anson. It's a great example of how traditional cisco knowledge is passed down through generations.

To watch the video, visit **www.hydloandfriends.com**

Each month, a new video will be added to Hydloandfriends.com. To learn more, listen to the Hydlo and Friends radio show on JBCCS. Its hosts, Luke MacLeod and Luc Duquette, discuss the environmental follow-up activities related to the Eastmain-1-A/Sarcelle/Rupert project, as well as the concerns of land users with regard to Hydro-Québec's facilities and activities.

Next show:
Wednesday, September 18,
at 8:00 a.m.

Eagles head west

Cree football team participates in 6 Nations Challenge

by Daniel Coyle

"Believe and achieve is our motto this year."

This is the message that Chisasibi's Trevor Monaghan delivered loud and clear to the players and supporters of the James Bay Eagles 6-A-Side football program.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Eagles represented Quebec at the recent 6 Nations Challenge in Brandon, Manitoba. The tournament, which highlights the best teams in 6-A-Side football, is aimed at player development as well as increasing participation among Aboriginal players across Canada.

"Six-A-Side football continues to grow across Canada, providing an avenue for smaller communities as well as those unequipped to manage the traditional 12-A-Side program the opportunity to still play tackle football," explained Football Canada executive director Shannon Donovan.

"The 6-A-Side brand of football is fast and exciting – it allows for players to play multiple positions on both sides of the ball and helps develop football fundamentals like passing, catching, blocking, tackling and kicking."

After going undefeated to be crowned champions at last year's 6 Nations Challenge in Ottawa, the Eagles carried the burden of high expectations to the 2013 tourney.

A new format, introduced this year, saw teams face off first in a shootout challenge, where each team receives a series of 10 plays beginning at their opponents' 45-yard line. The Eagles struggled in their two shoot-out games, falling to host Team Manitoba 24-22 and tying rival team Saskatchewan 36-36.

The Eagles would get their revenge on Saskatchewan in their following game, posting a 46-36 victory before being defeated by this year's champion, Team Manitoba, by a score of 50-20.

The 2013 edition of the 6 Nations Challenge marked the first time in the event's history that all participating teams were led by Aboriginal head coaches, including Monaghan, who has been the driving force behind the Eagles' program since it started.

"The work we put in is to help our First Nations youth develop life skills, have new experiences and choose a healthy lifestyle," explained Monaghan, who founded the James Bay Eagles football program. "They are the next generation."

Gavin Young (Manitoba) and Justin Pooyak (Saskatchewan) round out this year's head coaching trio.

The Eagles program has now expanded to include competitive teams at the Peewee, Bantam and Midget levels, all of which won championships this year. According to Monaghan, this success is a result of the Eagles' development-first approach.

"When Football Canada agreed to help [the Eagles] get the 6-A-Side program started five years ago, we had a few objectives to meet," explained Monaghan in a post-tournament post on the Eagles' Facebook page.

"First was to develop community members as coaches and that I oversee the high performance program as a manager. This meant less on-the-field coaching, and allowing our young coaches [to gain] experience teaching the sport of football."

Prior to boarding the bus for the long road trip to Manitoba, Monaghan delivered a poignant message of thanks to Eagle supporters via the James Bay Eagles' Facebook page.

"Wanna thank all the alumni, past players, current and graduates plus the parents for your continued support. Also the CNC for their resources and the community for embracing football, it's the ultimate team sport," said Monaghan.

"Some of you will not be with us in person, but be with us in spirit and good thoughts. As we travel across the country to pursue our dream, of being the best 6-A-Side team in the country. Beat Team Saskatchewan and Team Manitoba is our goal.

"Believe and achieve is our motto this year."

New police cadet program to engage with teenagers

The Eeyou Eenou Police Force (EEPF) is accepting candidates for a new cadet program that could get underway this fall. The pilot project will initially focus on the communities of Whapamagoostui, Eastmain and Oujé-Bougoumou.

The program is the brainchild of EEPF managers, who want to diminish the teenage idleness that can lead to petty crime. By providing the youth an opportunity to learn firsthand from EEPF officers, the program not only has the potential to reduce crime but to usher in the next generation of police officers.

The cadet program is aimed at involving local youth in social activities to help them develop a sense of citizenship. The cadet program will at first recruit 15- and 16-year-olds and open up to 14-year-olds in the future.

During their time in the program the cadets will be put into the field to learn from their mentoring officers and actively engage with their local community. Though cadets will not be involved with actual law enforcement activities, they will become familiar with the inner workings of the police station by providing service on the front counter and assisting with department supplies. The cadets will be given a safe initiation to firearms along with CPR and swim training.

The new program is an opportunity for high school students who wish to gain a better understanding of their society and help their community. It will also help connect the youth with the police officers and emergency workers by demystifying security professions.

The program is a path to employment with the EEPF, where they can serve as surveillance or provide security during social events. In the long term, cadets may one day become full-fledged law-enforcement officers as they learn what it means to serve and protect their community.

Archeological dig breaks new ground

An archaeological team began a two-week excavation in late August on a Waskaganish site that is believed to contain artifacts up to 7,000 years old.

The Saunders Goose Pond site was identified last summer after local resident Christopher Wesley found rough stone blades and arrowheads there. The site claims historical significance as a traditional fishing locale.

Led by Jim Chism of the Waskaganish Cultural Institute and CRA archaeologist Dario Izaguirre, the excavation aims to uncover clues about how people lived in James Bay thousands of years ago.

"We're trying to find organic materials like charcoal or bone so that carbon dating can give us a more precise idea of how old the site is," said Izaguirre.

Evidence dating back to such ancient time periods is virtually non-existent in northern climates, particularly in the James Bay region of the Canadian Shield, as much the land was below sea level at the time.

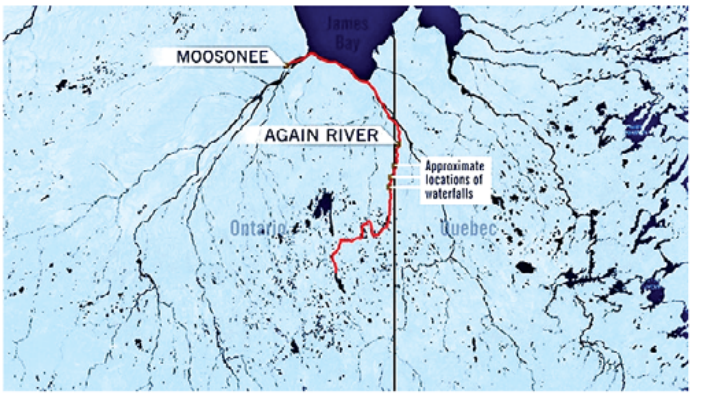
Geographer "discovers" Cree territory

The "discovery" of seven waterfalls along the Again River in the Hudson Bay Lowlands by Canadian geographer Adam Shoalts was met with the confusion and disdain of some members of Moose Cree First Nation in August.

Shoalts received considerable praise from the Royal Canadian Geographical Society for being the first to officially map the waterfalls in late July. Some even went so far as to credit him with being the first to travel the river in its entirety despite conclusive evidence that local First Nations had been canoeing on the Again for centuries before Shoalts was born.

John Turner, a former Moose Cree researcher, conducted interviews with several Elders in the early 2000s that confirm that the Again River was a vital transportation route for Moose Cree as recently as 60 years ago.

"Until air transportation became more prominent in the North, the river was one of the main routes south of Moose



Factory that was used to reach Quebec," said Turner. "Obviously the portages and traces of use have grown over in the last half-century. Some of the Elders I interviewed specifically described an elevated point on the river where you could see James Bay on a clear day."

While Turner admits that Shoalts' mapping of the area deserves recognition, he describes the scientific geographical community's perspective on the work as "troubling."

"It strikes me as a distinctly colonialist attitude," said Turner. "They act as if no one has ever been there, even though people have been there for centuries."

Comic strip courtesy of Tundra Comics: www.tundracomics.com

feature

Courses coming to you!

Eeyou Istchee's upcoming career programs

by Amy German

All photos courtesy of Sabtuan

If you've been thinking about a new career but can't figure out just what might be the best choice for you or wonder if the course is something that you would enjoy, read on.

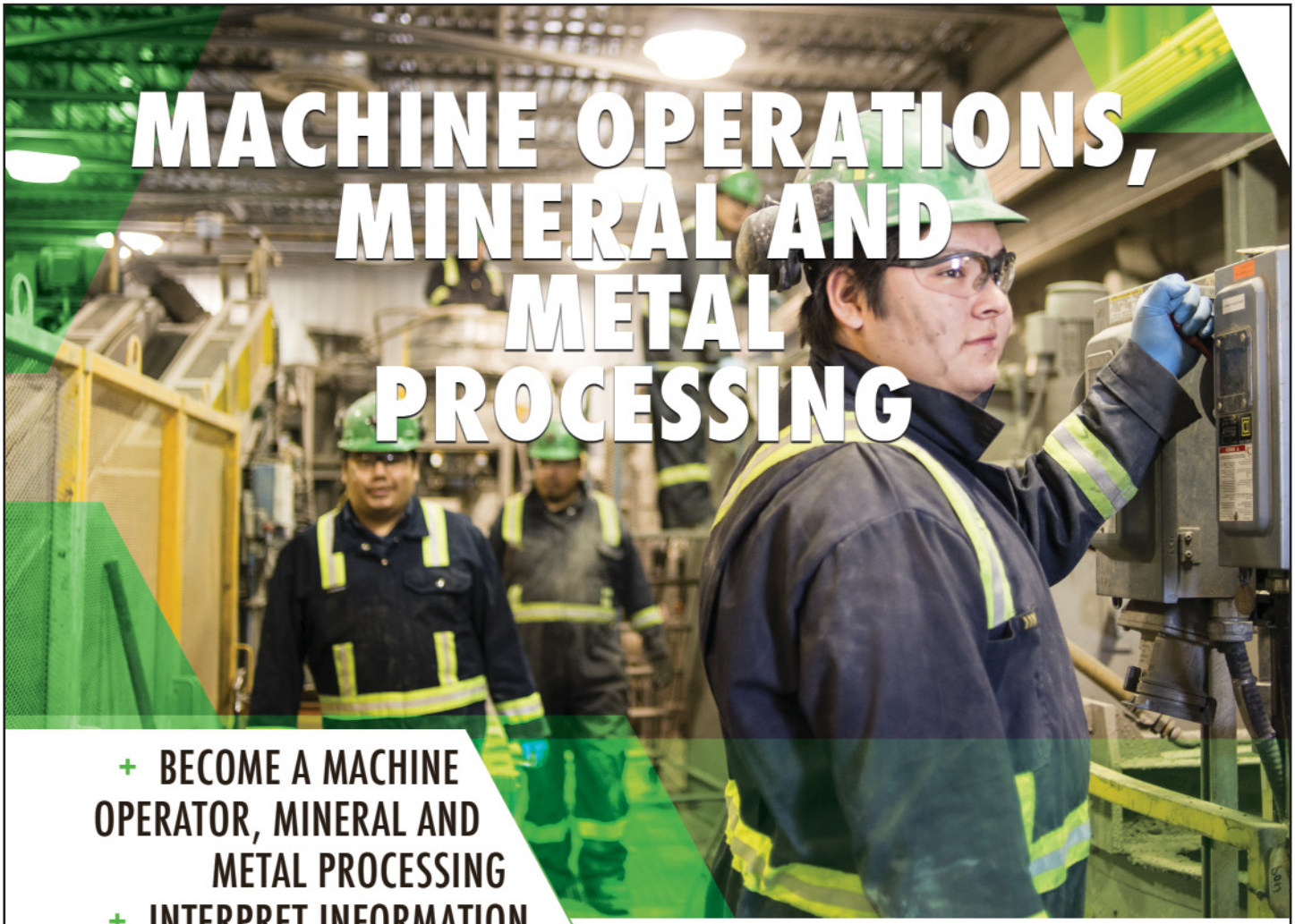
To look at what will be offered between now and March 2014, the Nation spoke to Joanie Verret, a communications consultant at the Sabtuan Adult Education Services of the Cree School Board.

Whether it's a new life on the road as a truck driver or working with the community's Elders and infirm in home care or a brand-new career in the service industry as a professional cook or in food and beverage services, there are numerous programs ready to start and they all need applicants.

"These courses all fit with the different (employment) demands that we have in the communities. We also know that it is sometimes difficult for people to move and so we try to satisfy the most students we can," said Verret. "What we offer, however, always depends on whether we can get those teachers to go to the communities."

A professional Northern Building Maintenance course will be offered in Whapmagoostui in October and, according to Verret, the instructors make the course fun.

"You really get to know everything you need to know about buildings and housing in the north.



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It's all about plumbing and heating systems and it is really hands-on," said Verret.

In this course students will be presented with real situations involving a building problem that they must identify and repair. This course is also being offered at the Sabtuan Regional Vocational Training Centre in Waswapini as of September and may still have space available for anyone interested.

In the community of Eastmain, students can study to become school-bus drivers starting in October. This course focuses on how to be a school bus driver according to provincial standards – as are all of the vocational courses.

The program helps students master the five industry standards required to become a bus driver: urban transport, school transport, intercity transportation, chartered transportation and paratransit. Completion of this course leads to a Class 1 license issued by the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec. This 330-hour program will be offered in Mistissini as of February 15.

"You'll get a Class 2 license with this program. You do need a driver's license to do this program and so you start out with a Class 5 and you graduate with Class 2, which is needed to drive busses," said Verret.

Learning how to manage school children is not part of this particular course, according to Verret. That education is extra-curricular, she joked.

This course will also be offered as of September in Waskaganish.

In Eastmain, a carpentry course will be offered as of March 2014.

"You don't need to have had any previous experience working with wood to do this course. You get to learn about the different kinds of wood and the equipment and machines used by the industry as well as smaller tools necessary for decorating," said Verret.

She described it as a creative course because of the amount of design elements in carpentry.

A student graduating from this program will be capable of constructing, erecting, maintaining and repairing wood structures, wood substitutes and other materials.

This 1350-hour program teaches tasks that will enable graduates to construct concrete forms, wood frames and steel bulkheads, as well as complete projects that involve making joints, assembly work, erecting and repairing wood and metal parts, applying interior and exterior finishes and landscaping projects.

This program will also be offered in November in Mistissini.

For the first time in Mistissini, a Home Care Assistance course will start in October.

"This kind of program works really well in the communities because the communities are close knit. With Home Care you are taking care of Elders or people with disabilities. Students going into this program have to be really in tune with their hearts and their minds because it's all about human needs and knowing how to react," said Verret.

Students will learn how to help clients integrate and socialize in individual or community activities. All of these tasks require establishing a relationship of trust with clients and those close to them. Home-care attendants also receive training in providing care and services in the home. They help vulnerable or at-risk clientele carry out everyday domestic activities, such as preparing meals. They also advise clients on their lifestyle habits and provide parenting support, if applicable.

The goal is to meet the general needs of clients, to help them compensate for their disabilities, to maintain and promote their autonomy, to accompany and support them in their daily and domestic lives, while taking into account any family or social problems that could interfere

This course runs 975 hours and is being offered in Nemaska in February 2014.

Come March, Mistissini will also offer an electrician training program.

"This course is about electrical systems in offices and buildings and so it includes things like voltage, power and circuits. It fits in well with the construction boom in the communities and runs

"IN THIS 1350-HOUR PROGRAM, STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT SAFE AND PROPER FOOD PREPARATION, HOW TO USE COOKING TOOLS AND KITCHEN EQUIPMENT, APPROPRIATE COOKING TECHNIQUES, PREPARATION OF FRUITS, VEGETABLES, MEATS, POULTRY, GAME, FISH AND SEAFOOD."

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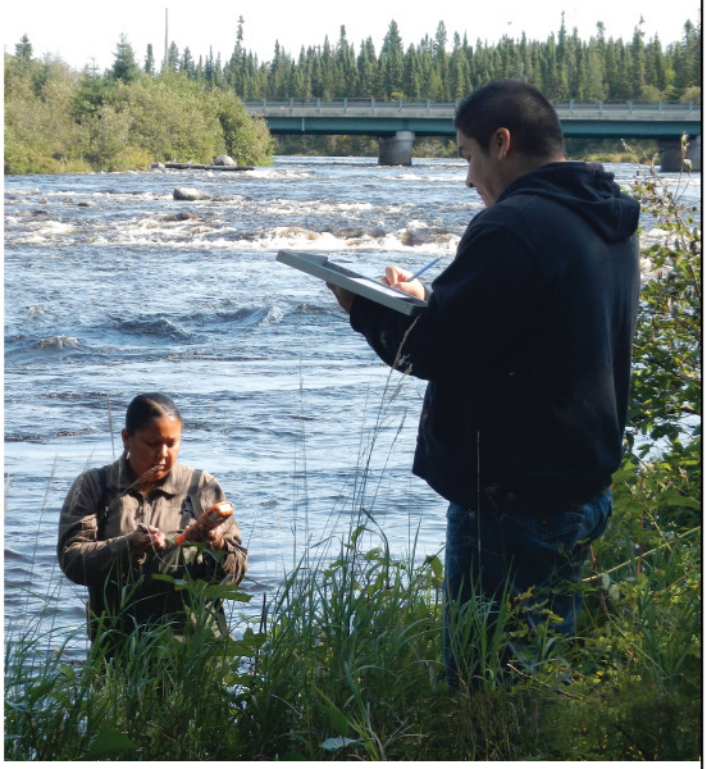

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complementary to those in the Northern Building Maintenance course as it does not touch upon electricity," said Verret.

This course runs 1800 hours and meets provincial standards.

Nemaska offers a Starting a Business course in September for budding entrepreneurs in Eeyou Istchee.

"On Facebook you see lots of different groups of people selling services in the communities for things like baked goods or take out. So, this teaches you how to use tools like Facebook. It can help you plan your future with a business plan. There is a real demand for this program and it will make our students stronger entrepreneurs and give them vision," said Verret.

As the home of the Sabtuan Regional Vocational Training Centre, Waswanipi offers the most programs to Cree students.

Brand new is the Desktop Publishing course that will start in February 2014.

"It's all about working with computers so it's ideal if you already have some background in this area," said Verret.

This program offers a variety of software courses that can lead to fields like graphic design, illustration and website design. Students in this 1800-hour program will learn how to use a wide variety of media.

For those handy in the kitchen, the professional cooking program will be offered in November while the program on food and beverage services begins in March.

"The difference between these two programs is that with the cooking course you are really just cooking. You will learn about nutrition and food groups and what makes a good meal," said Verret. "Food and Beverages is all about serving. You learn how to become a waiter and how to present a menu and set a table."

Students in the cooking course learn to work in a variety of professional kitchens in restaurants, hotels, cruise ships, Elder's homes and other facilities.

In this 1350-hour program, students learn about safe and proper food preparation, how to use cooking tools and kitchen equipment, appropriate cooking techniques, preparation of fruits, vegetables, meats, poultry, game, fish and seafood. They will learn how to make soups, basic dough, pastries, hors d'oeuvres and entremets and showpieces for cold buffets. Students will also learn prepare and serve various menus such as breakfast, table d'hôte, à la carte and buffets.

Meanwhile, the service course is 960 hours. Here students learn how to prepare a dining room, proper customer rapport, how to explain menus and dishes, to take and process orders, to perform billing and collection operations, to recommend and serve wines, to provide beverage service, to provide banquet service, to provide informal service, to provide formal service, and how to integrate into the workplace.

Starting in January, the Sabtuan Centre is offering a new Surveying and Topography course.

"This course trains students to become land-survey technicians. While it is very technical, it is ideal for students who like to work on the land. You really have to know the land as it is all about the earth's surface and what lies beneath it."

Students in this program learn how to gather all of the necessary data for construction projects, in the mining industry and various other types of industries relating to land development. More information on this course is available through Sabtuan.

For those who like the independent life on the road, Sabtuan will be offering a course on truck driving come October.

This 615-hour course teaches students about defensive and fuel-efficient driving, courtesy behind the wheel, professionalism in the field, time management, handling of unexpected events and emergencies, and positive image projection.

In Matagami, the Ore Extraction program starts in September. It's a 930-hour program ideal for those looking for long-term employment in the mining industry.

The course teaches students how to use equipment in the field and gives them required safety training. "This program offers a lot of hands-on learning. It's a big course with lots of long hours and long days," said Verret.

In Wemindji, a Machine Operations, Mineral and Metal Processing course starts in October, and is a perfect fit for the major mining development in that area.

"We are really stressing this program because, while it can be a little difficult as there's a lot of material to learn, it is a really fun program," said Verret.

More on this program can be found out via the Cree School Board.

For those who feel that they might not be ready to apply to these programs, Verret said that catch-up courses for prerequisites or to complete any sort of general education training are available through the communities. Contact your local guidance counselor for more information.

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Back to school tips for students of all ages

by Will Nicholls

There are some surprising new studies that may change the way we look at studying. CEO Ashish Rangnekar of BenchPrep says we have to look at studying in a new light because new research from places like the University of Wisconsin-Madison found that many popular study habits are not beneficial at all and, in some cases, are actually detrimental. To get ahead check out the following:

Six Bad Study Habits Students Should Change Immediately

1. Studying at home: Studying at home seems convenient and easy, but there are way too many distractions there. Maybe it's a talkative roommate, the TV, texts and Facebook, or the growing pile of clothes to be washed. Any of these can break concentration or give you a reason to procrastinate. Consider going to the library and finding a quiet room or desk away from all of these diversions.

2. Procrastinating: Every student is guilty of procrastination at one time or another, but that doesn't mean it's acceptable. Procrastination can lead to doing things halfway and not retaining as much information as necessary to finish projects or to ace, much less pass, that important exam. If a student is a regular procrastinator, then it is time to work on time-management skills and ways to schedule earlier, and calmer, study sessions.

3. Listening to music: The benefits of listening to music while studying are now questioned. Classical music was believed to increase spatial abilities and improve learning but research can't support this theory. In fact, recent studies show that music may actually impair cognitive abilities and hinder memorization because of the changing words and notes in songs. Studying in silence or amid a little white noise will not distract from thinking and can help a student concentrate easier.

4. Not making an outline: If a student is not making outlines while studying or writing a paper, then the results most likely will not be the intended grade. An outline helps to keep track of large amounts of information, organize ideas and present the class material in a logical way.

5. Highlighting the textbook: Some advice may recommend reading a textbook and marking the pages with a neon highlighter as a way to study for an upcoming exam, but, in reality, this is one of the least effective ways for students to absorb content. Instead, students should quiz themselves on what they just read. This will help to retain more information and score higher on exams.

6. Pulling all-nighters: Everyone has done this at one time or another, but staying up all night cramming for an exam has been shown to be harmful for test preparation and performance. Becoming a zombie doesn't help at all. The best way to avoid pulling all-nighters is to study ahead of time. Reread the section above on procrastination. Students need to dedicate a few days a week (or more) to study and review the material to avoid trying to cram everything into that brain in one night.

So, how can a student make their study habits more effective?

Six Good Study Habits for Academic Success

1. Pay attention to study location: Find a quiet, uncluttered, distraction-free area away from home. Different spots may work for different subjects. When doing research, look for Wi-Fi hotspots that can give easy access to secondary information sources or help explain textbook concepts. But remember; keep away from the Facebook page or chat room. Fewer distractions mean less stress and that will make a big difference.

2. Vary study topics: Psychologists say alternating study topics rather than cramming on a specific one in a single session leaves a deeper impression on the brain. So, don't grind on the same subject all night. Change it up, take breaks and re-visit the material in intervals. This has been proven to enhance retention.

3. Make information meaningful: Whether it's creating rhymes or pat-

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terns, or even relating material to something else (i.e. through word or scenario associations), these tactics can make information more meaningful and will enhance information recollection. The University of Maryland reports that mnemonic devices, or memory tricks, are particularly useful for remembering factual information like names, dates, formulas or other information that requires rote memorization.

4. Tap online resources: Don't get stuck on a problem or resigned to an ill-fated grade in a difficult class as there are powerful resources at a student's fingertips. For example, companies like Academic Earth offer a comprehensive online collection of free video tutorials for college courses – all accessible at no cost. OpenStudy enables internet users to readily connect and engage with other students who are learning the same subjects at the same time – regardless of school, expertise or location – facilitating online, on-demand peer-to-peer assistance, support and other helpful interactions.

5. Engage in social learning: Research has found that there is a benefit to studying with friends. In one recent study from the Jacobs School of Engineering at the University of California San Diego, it was revealed that "the higher the volume of interaction, the more likely the students were willing to exchange information in more complex ways and with greater frequency, forming 'information cascades,' a mechanism that spreads information from a single source to one or multiple sources."

6. Have a great study attitude: Think positive and focus on skills. Rather than dreading the experience, thinking positive will make the time to study easier to approach. In fact, "study attitude" was identified in research as one of four pillars that "play a critical and central role in determining students' academic performance." In short, study time is a friend. Regard it that way and, soon enough, any student can look forward to a productive, self-fulfilled academic experience.

"Ultimately, students should identify their own study preferences – what works for them on a consistent basis – and act accordingly," Rangnekar notes. "For example, some students study better in the morning or can better focus in smaller chunks of time rather than a marathon session. Knowing exactly what does and does not work on a personal level and then proactively creating a study plan and schedule around the proven effective methods, is the most powerful study tool of all."

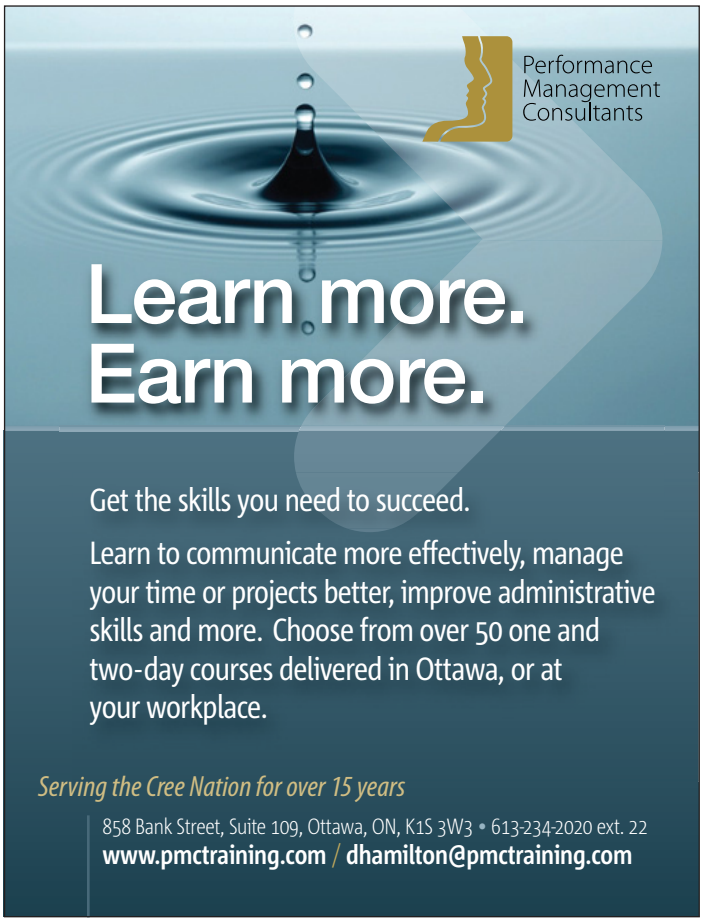
Daily Planner

I bought one for my oldest son when he went to school. I had the teachers enter times and dates of his classes, upcoming tests and homework. His teachers would initial it and indicate what classes he attended, if there was a test coming up and what was taught. This made it easier to help him if there were any problems, as they would indicate areas of concern. I would initial his planner to indicate I made sure he did his homework, studied for a test or worked with him on a project.

The proactive parent who wants their child to succeed and is willing to work a little to make it happen can succeed just making sure the homework is done. Other times it involves helping your child prepare for a test by quizzing them. It doesn't take a lot of time in most cases and your child will respond. The interest you show encourages them to do well.

Swagger Tags

It's a pain in the butt when your kid loses something at school. Most communities have limited choices in styles and colours of backpacks, for example. An inexpensive way to personalize any student's belongings is with Swaggertags. You can customize the tags and they are easy to attach to your gear. This increases the likelihood that a lost item will be returned. It is especially useful for younger students to identify their backpacks and helps teachers and other parents in identifying the bag if it's left behind. A company or entity logo can be added making it possible for getting sponsors for schools and sports teams. For more information, contact Pierre at promo@beesum-communications.com



CHRD on tour

Taking human resources development to the people

by Amy German

Cree Human Resources Development (CHRD) will soon hit the road to promote programs they offer to improve our lives.

While this Cree entity has been around for some time to assist Crees with issues like financial aid for their studies, employment initiatives, and to provide skills and development training, it has been a while since they went on a road trip.

"We have done these kinds of tours previously, but it hasn't happened since the late 1990s or early 2000s," said Denise Brown, the CHRD Coordinator of Programs and Services.

Starting in September, the tour will visit all the communities to showcase the entity and highlight recent changes.

"The purpose of the tour is to highlight our new initiatives that were started in the territorial programs, like mining and ECN (Eeyou Communications Network). We also have more enhanced initiatives for persons with disabilities and more community-based programming," said Brown.

The goal is to bring these programs to life for Crees. They will hear presentations from people who know them best and can answer questions about the programs, employment fields, and what support participants can access. It's not just about perusing the goods and picking up pamphlets, this event will help many Crees find new career paths.

The CHRD has evolved in recent years to adapt to the needs of a changing employment market and education needs.

"Besides basic changes like the overturn of personnel, we have streamlined our programs. Previously we had 13 and we still have those in general, but we have now changed them to field-development programs, student programs, market development programs and employment programs," said Brown.

Showcasing the changes to the persons with disabilities file will be a special feature of the tour. Brown said that while CHRD has had a special initiative for those with disabilities for some time, they improved it this year after receiving increased funding. This has allowed the CHRD to hire a new coordinator,

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The *Nation* is turning 20! To commemorate this historic occasion, the *Nation* is embarking on a retrospective countdown to its 20th Anniversary in November 2013. In the next 4 issues, the *Nation* flashback will feature some of the *Nation*'s stories, photos and award winning coverage throughout the years, which will be compiled in a 20th collector's edition issue.

Volume 16, No. 01

1993-1996

The Nation Timeline

Paul Gull

Dec. 15, 1993: Hydro job creation myth – Hydro-Québec agreed, in 1986, to create 154 person-years of employment for Crees, only 10 to 20 achieved

Jan. 20, 1994: The land is our dictionary – The Cree School Board's Paul Gull says education must begin at home, progress to an improved school system and always be rooted in the land

Feb. 17, 1994: Hydro meddling again – H-Q asks Grand Council to change Cree composition of government committees studying company's Great Whale River Project

March 19, 1994: It's our right to decide – Quebec sovereignty debate presents Crees with opportunity to redefine their relationship with provincial and federal governments

March 31, 1994: Makivik ripped off in Hydro deal – Inuit to receive a fraction of promised compensation for Great Whale River project

June 17, 1994: It's time to listen to the trappers – Freddy Jolly seeks compensation for Route du Nord's damages to his trapline

July 1, 1994: Quebec wants to restrict Cree moose hunt – After ignoring warnings about clearcutting in moose country for years, province blames Crees for decline

July 15, 1994: Turn on Power of the North – Moving documentary recounts Cree fight against the Great Whale project

Aug. 26, 1994: Air Creebec flying into the black – After four and a half years, and necessary downsizing and restructuring, airline finally makes a profit

Matthew Coon-come

Sept. 9, 1994: MoCreebec expelled –Mushkegowuk Council shuns "unofficial" band; MoCreebec says move violates the council's own constitution

Oct. 21, 1994: O'Reilly resigns as Cree general counsel – Grand Council lawyer James O'Reilly felt position had become purely "symbolic"

Nov. 7, 1994: Wally Rabbitskin 1st in Quebec – Mistissini man first among province's participants in Montreal Marathon

Dec. 2, 1994: Crees jubilant over Great Whale victory – Premier Jacques Parizeau postpones dreaded river project indefinitely, partying ensues

Jan. 20, 1995: Moose Factory vets reject compensation offer – Native WWII vets offered $4,000 in lieu of promised three acres; feds cite Indian Act stipulation forbidding land ownership

Feb. 17, 1995: No room at the inn? – Chisasibi man files discrimination complaint with Quebec Human Rights Commission against Val d'Or's Journey's End Motel

March 3, 1995: Hearings will look at Cree future – Chiefs establish commission to canvass public opinion on what to do in the event of Quebec separation

March 17, 1995: Rights too costly, says "appalling" Indian Affairs document – Federal bureaucrats try to water down UN Declaration on Social Development

March 31, 1995: "I don't have anything against the Great Whale people": Robert Kanatewat – Cree-Naskapi commissioner and former Chisasibi chief favours dam

April 14, 1995: Native rights not respected – On 25th anniversary of "White Paper," Canadian Human Rights Commission says Native plight is Canada's "most pressing human rights problem"

June 16, 1995: Common goals – CSB chairman Paul Gull to step down; "One of the major accomplishments was to bring the education home to our communities," he says.

July 28, 1995: ABCs of Cree politics – The Resolution gives Crees the power to enact laws, rules, procedures and more, at local and regional levels

Oct. 6, 1995: Bill I called "A shameful declaration" – Coon Come says Quebec's Declaration of Sovereignty "denies our existence"

Oct. 20, 1995: Circle sentencing in the Cree Nation – Precedent set as Quebec judge sentences Waskaganish man on recommendation of Circle of Elders

Nov. 3, 1995: 96.3 say "No" in Cree referendum – Six days

before Quebec referendum, 77 per cent of eligible voters turn out to give thumbs down to sovereignty

Dec. 1, 1995: Reunion at the Sheraton – 20th anniversary of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, a time for celebration for some, reflection for others

Feb. 16, 1996: War of words over separation – Feds support partition of a sovereign Quebec for Crees and other First Nations that wish to remain in Canada

March 15, 1996: Crees unite on development – Grand Council given mandate to "protect and strengthen" Cree rights at three-day conference on natural-resource policy

April 1, 1996: "Bigfoot signs deal with Crees," reports "The Nation Enquirer"

April 12, 1996: A soul satisfied – George Diamond describes the traditional goose hunt of his youth: "That was the way we did it. Nothing was thrown away and wasted."

April 26, 1996: Cree construction in court over Route du Nord – After two years attempting out-of-court settlements, Freddy Jolly files lawsuit to protect trapping grounds

May 10, 1996: A little bit about Nemiscau – Chief George Wapachee reflects on his community's evolution through the '70s, in the wake of the JBNQA

June 7, 1996: 1st Aboriginal Film Awards – A documentary about Natives' fight to preserve their cultures wins four prizes at the inaugural gala in Edmonton

July 19, 1996: AGA passes landmark resolution: Cree constitution and government in works – "We must empower ourselves to decide what is important for the preservation of our language, our culture, our communities"

Aug. 16, 1996: Dusting off idea of a Cree Education Act – Act would allow Crees to self-govern, side-step accountability to Quebec's education ministry

Sept. 27, 1996: Violet Pachano, Another first – First female Cree Nation chief elected National Vice-Grand Chief; focuses on instilling Cree values and pride in youth

Nov. 8, 1996: Aboriginal rights don't exist in Quebec, says gov't – Province's chiefs pass joint resolution denouncing "racially discriminatory and colonial positions"

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Wendell Nicholas, who will be on the tour to promote the file.

"Wendell Nicholas is legally blind and is very knowledgeable when it comes to persons with disabilities. We want to show people with disabilities that this fund is here help them and we want to help those with disabilities who want to work into the workplace," said Brown.

Part of this too will be to show the disabled just how an employer can adapt a work situation to the needs of someone who is disabled so that they can integrate into the workplace.

Darlene Wapachee will be on the tour as the new liaison officer for Emploi-Québec to answer questions related to provincial programs.

Likewise, the CHRD's Youth Development Officer, Catherine Quinn, will showcase youth initiative programs.

As for the two other CHRD initiatives, Blazo Voyager will answer questions about ECN and Stephen Forward will present Strategic Partnership Programs for foundational skills (SPF) with the mining industry programs.

Since the new fibre-optic network went up, ECN has contracted out a portion of the work to Texas-based Alcatel-Lucent until Cree technicians are able to manage the system.

As ECN will be carrying out the same general functions as any other fibre-optics and telecom company, such as providing service to residential, council and commercial customers, they will be offering training in three specific fields to meet the employment needs of the region.

"These three job profiles will be for outside plant technicians, and training for the network operating centre. (There will be network-operating centres in Mistissini and in Wemindji.) There's also going to be another course for telecom technicians and they will have the same role as the computer technician within the building," said Voyager.

While some courses have already started in Mistissini and Chisasibi, Voyager said that one reason he's on this tour is encourage Crees to go into the field, as there aren't enough people currently studying in these programs to meet the employment boom. As there will be multiple training cohorts, Crees can enter this field of training as soon as they feel ready.

"We start out by asking people if they have Sec 5 or a passion for communication technology. There is no entry level program required, we basically test individuals to determine if they have any skills gaps and then build them into being qualified technicians," said Voyager.

According to Forward, the same approach applies to the many well-paying jobs that will be available in the mining industry. This skills training will take place both in the classroom and on the job.

This program is being offered as a special collaboration between CHRD, Sabtuan Education, Eeyou Mining Skills and the SPF partnership program, Goldcorp, Tawich-Redpath Norescon Mining and Stornaway.

"The program is a partnership that is tied to the industry and so this particular program that I work on is an essential skills program, essential skills being foundational skills or workplace-related skills.

"This program specifically works on literacy, which is reading comprehension, mathematics for the workplace, document use and communication. This is what we zero in on," said Forward.

The concept is to offer a continuum of support for people learning this kind of technical work to help them excel.

"It's about refreshing their skills and then offering ongoing support. When they exit the Cree School Board program and go to the mine site, there are essential skills training available there. They are paid leave time to work on the skill gaps that they might have in the workplace. The technical training and the workplace don't always mirror each other," said Forward.

As this kind of work can be highly technical, with its own vernacular of terminology, the point is to go the extra mile to ensure the safety of those working on the job site and to offer the best workplace experience possible. Mine safety is essential and so the SPF program takes learning beyond the bare minimum required to obtain a card.

For more info on the upcoming community tours: chrd.ca

Awarding excellence

AGA gala honours five Cree students

by Akiva Levitas

Jasmine Namagoose

Meagan Icebound-Ottereyes (centre)

Kayleigh Spencer

Five young Cree students were recognized for their hard work recently when they were named the inaugural recipients of Academic Excellence awards for the secondary sector.

The Cree Nation Achievement Awards Foundation (CNAAF) honoured the five bright academic stars at an honorary banquet August 7 in Wemindji for their work during the 2012 scholastic year. Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come, Deputy Grand Chief Rodney Mark and Cree School Board chairperson Kathleen Wootton presented the academic excellence awards to the promising students along with laptops and iPads.

Nominees for the award were sent in from each of the nine Cree communities and hard decisions were made to select the winners. Kayleigh Spencer from Mistissini was acknowledged for her active participation in school where she scored high marks in math and sciences.

"I felt like I had so much weight lifted off my shoulders for being recognized for all my hard work. I felt a huge motivation to start college this fall knowing that, in the end, all of my effort is paid off," said Spencer.

Also active in sports, Spencer is an elite volleyball and award-winning basketball player. Spencer's dream is to become the first Cree doctor in Mistissini.

"Before I went on the stage, I was very nervous. Every single bone in my body was shaking knowing that all these people would be watching me but as I stood in front of them, I felt pride," Spencer said. "I felt honoured to be standing in front of leaders from all across the Cree Nation. It was an awesome feeling."

Another talented athlete, Jasmine Namagoose from Eastmain, was honoured for her hard work. As an honours student, her positive attitude and work ethic is invaluable to her post-secondary education. Waswanipi resident Meagan Icebound-Ottereyes is in her final stretch of high school, but has already been recognized for her hard work with four Certificates of Achievement in a span of four months as well as an Incentive award from the Board of Compensation.

Kevin Lacroix from Oujé-Bougoumou and Joshua Gull Cooper from Waswanipi both received awards in the special needs category. Lacroix's achievement is a testament to hard work and courage. Despite a lifetime of physical health ailments, he overcame many challenges in order to graduate and continue towards his goal of becoming a video-game developer. Already a recipient of awards this year for the Seven Grandfather Teachings and Respect, Most Improved, and Canoe Trip Leadership, Cooper adds Academic Excellence to his mantle.

"BEFORE I WENT ON THE STAGE, I WAS VERY NERVOUS. EVERY SINGLE BONE IN MY BODY WAS SHAKING KNOWING THAT ALL THESE PEOPLE WOULD BE WATCHING ME BUT AS I STOOD IN FRONT OF THEM, I FELT PRIDE. **I FELT HONOURED TO BE STANDING IN FRONT OF LEADERS FROM ALL ACROSS THE CREE NATION. IT WAS AN AWESOME FEELING.**"

Presenting the awards is part of the CNAAF's goals of honouring the Crees of Eeyou Istchee from within the community. "It's time to acknowledge our successes as a Nation and to acknowledge the people from the past, present and future," said Dianne Ottereyes Reid, CNAAF advisor and president of Aanischaaukamikw. "I asked each of (the winners) how it felt to receive it because I wanted to hear their opinions," Reid said. "They all said it made them feel proud and they were all very excited."

Being the first year, the pool of nominees wasn't large enough to accommodate a primary school section but with more awareness and the recognition of their peers the CNAAF wants to increase the selection pool. "The most important outcome is that the youth will have the desire and the will to continue their education," Reid explained. "We want them to say, 'I want to go higher' or 'I want to continue on into post-secondary' with the motivation the award gives them."

The CNAAF already awards people who have finished or are completing their bachelors, masters and doctorates. The organization also recognizes those Cree who serve as role models in leadership and community service, corporate community involvement, Cree culture and language, and women's contributions. "It's really about motivating members to go further in their studies beyond secondary," Reid said.

Creating role models for future generations is a priority for the CNAAF. "By having an award, it creates motivation to work hard and pursue education to a higher level," Spencer said. "However, in my opinion, seeing other people from the Cree Nation who have achieved post-secondary is just as motivating."

In order to be considered for the award, a student must maintain a grade average of at least 80%. However, extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs and cultural-event participation along with how much improvement a student has made during the year, are also components of the judging process.

Future plans include raising the number of winners to six for the regular sector, three for special needs, and three for alternatives being awarded once every two years. Despite the small

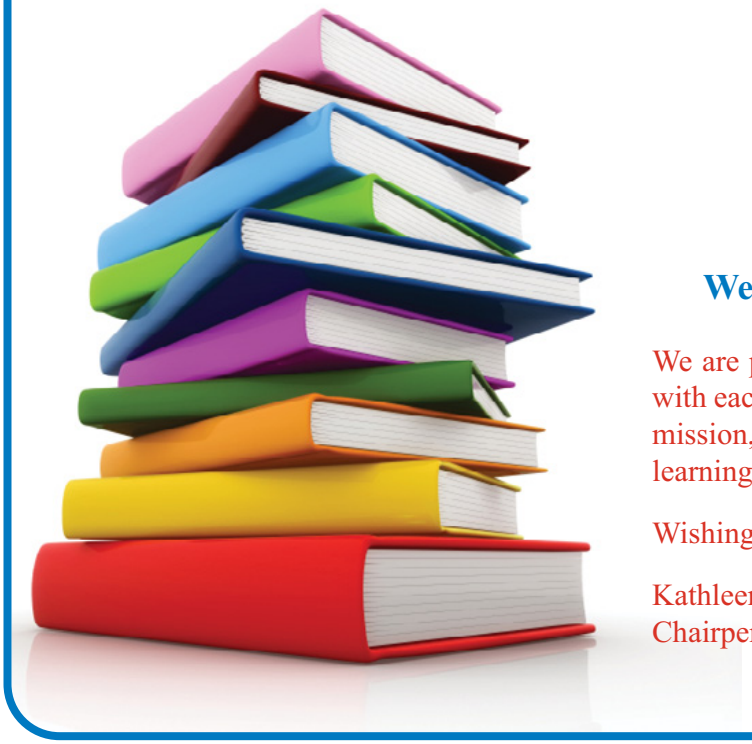
pool of nominees, Reid is hopeful about the next award ceremony. "It's our first year, so for the next achievement awards gala which will take place on August 28, 2014, we need to inform people about the opportunities," he said.

Also on the horizon for the CNAAF is a Lifetime Achievement Award, which will be given to its first recipient in the coming year. The new category is currently in its early phase but it will be an exciting new honour bestowed upon those who have spent a lifetime working for the betterment of their communities.

The toughest part of school is maintaining focus on the outcome, added Spencer. "Just don't quit. There's nothing else to it. When I say don't quit, I don't mean don't quit going to class, I mean don't quit trying, don't quit listening to your teachers because they are there to guide you. Don't quit giving your all in everything you do. Strive for success. If it's in school or in anything else, make a habit of being the best you can be. High school is only the beginning."

Joshua Gull Cooper

Kevin Lacroix



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Cree School Board
Commission scolaire Crie

To all the students, teachers, staff, parents and grandparents! Welcome to the 2013-2014 school year!

We are proud to serve you and look forward to working with each of you as we continue to strive in achieving our mission, serving our students to provide for life-long learning!

Wishing everyone a successful and fun school year!

Kathleen Wootton
Chairperson

Abraham Jolly
Director General

Freedom Writers Betty Anne and Erin Gruwell

"GRUWELL'S STUDENTS DISCOVERED THAT WRITING IS A POWERFUL WAY OF DEALING WITH THE CARDS SOCIETY HAD DEALT THEM. THEY LEARNED THAT THROUGH THEIR STORIES, THEY COULD WRITE A NEW HISTORY."

SHARING EXPERIENCE

A Freedom Writer in Mistissini says,

'Never give up!'

by Eleanor Cowan

On June 1, 1990, a 13-year-old Secondary 2 student at Voyageur Memorial School in Mistissini received a letter from the then-Commissioner of the Cree School Board, Kenny Blacksmith. The typewritten note of congratulations commended Betty Anne Forward for her choice of a powerful public-speaking topic, Women and Violence; a speech she delivered before two audiences – the first in her hometown and the second at the regionals in Waswanipi.

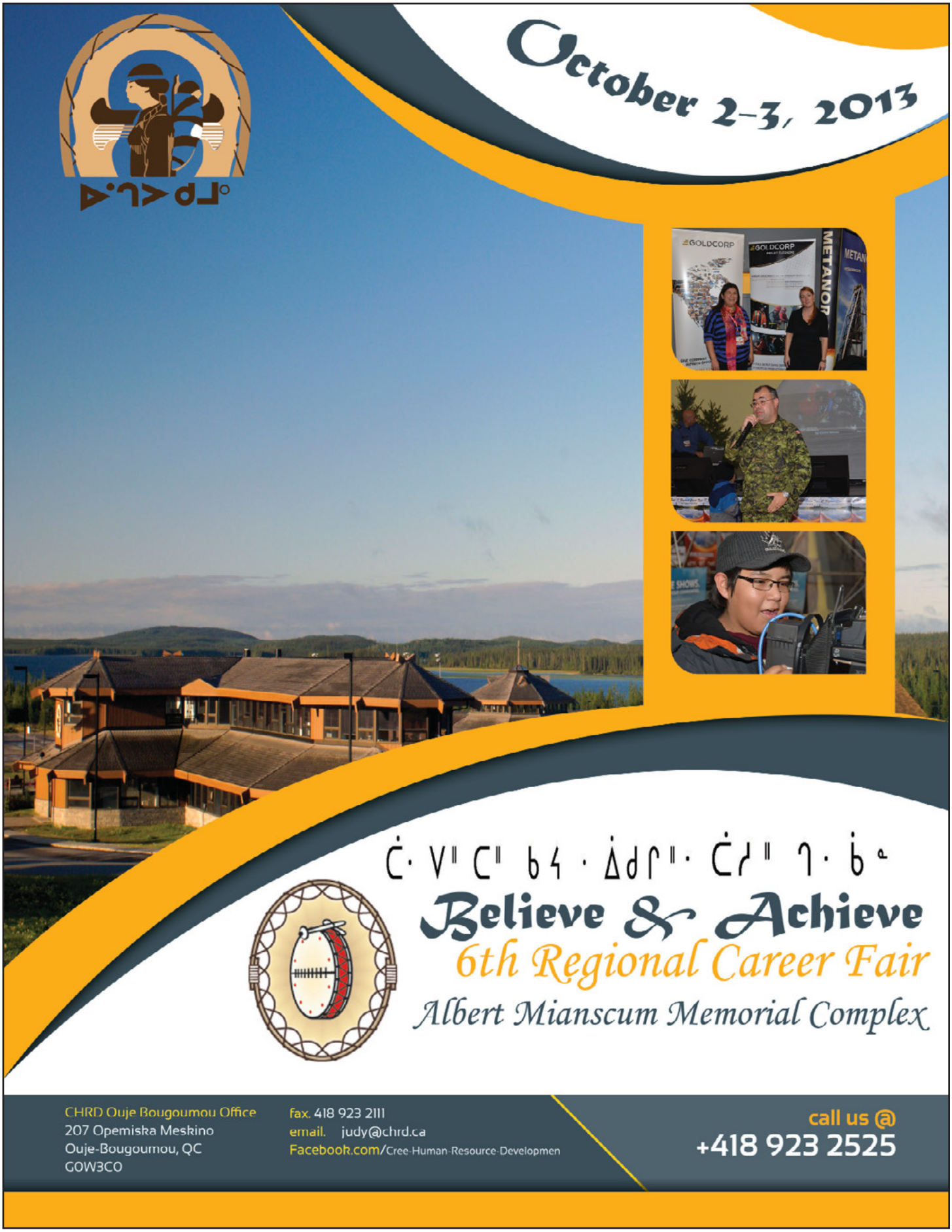
By choosing to write and speak about an edgy and often avoided issue, Forward was, without realizing it, becoming a voice and an activist for universal concerns – in other words, a Freedom Writer.

A few years later, following the 1993 Los Angeles riots and the O.J. Simpson trial, a gifted high school teacher in Long Beach, California, rallied support for an "at risk" class of inner city high school students, who believed they'd been "written off" by the world. Their poor exam marks, juvenile police records, tragic family histories and racial hostilities gave them a bad reputation, even in their own school. However, Erin Gruwell proved that one determined teacher could turn all that around.

Gruwell began by giving her students books they could relate to, stories of other teenagers such as *The Diary of Anne Frank*, about a victim of the Nazi Holocaust, as well as dozens of biographies written by courageous teens all over the world. Over time, her students began to empathize with each other and with young people everywhere, no matter their nation or language.

Gruwell's students began writing anonymous journal entries about the adversities they faced in their daily lives. Without disclosing themselves to each other, they wrote about what it felt like to be kicked or beaten as a child, and how that pain can turn into a self-hatred that eats away their insides. They wrote about gangs, drugs, death, anorexia, dyslexia, teenage love, weight issues, divorce, suicide and all their issues that needed voicing.

What the students noticed, though, as their stories were read out in class, and as each one was appreciated and honoured, is that they began to say, "Hey, I wrote that. That story is about me." They also wrote about their teacher who often housed them for safety reasons, so that even today, Gruwell and her former students are very much connected. Their children are her grandchildren.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Gruwell's students discovered that writing is a powerful way of dealing with the cards society had dealt them. They learned that through their stories, they could write a new history.

Fast forward to 2007. After a busy day with her Secondary 3 students, Forward – now an English teacher in her home community of Mistissini – and her husband, Ben Matoush, settled down to watch a DVD. Forward had no idea that within a few minutes her teaching life would soar to new heights.

The film, *Freedom Writers*, starred Hilary Swank and told the story of an inspired teacher and a group of enthusiastic student writers working together in a Long Beach classroom. By reading about other youth all over the world, and by writing stories about their own histories, each student's personal experience became universal.

The following morning, Forward set in motion the principles of "freedom writing" in her own classroom at Voyageur Memorial School. For the past seven years, she has encouraged her students to read riveting stories about other teens from around the world, to write about how they can relate and to begin to write stories of their own lives, centred in Mistissini. It seems, no matter how far apart teens may be, their shared experiences are part of one universal heart.

"I noticed that over time, my students also claimed their own stories," said Forward. "When they saw how warmly their stories were received in class, they began to overcome their fear of embarrassment and say, 'I wrote that.'"

Forward had a huge surprise this past June – she posed for a photo with her mentor, Erin Gruwell, at the annual Freedom Writers Training Conference in California. Asked by the Cree School Board to attend the event, Forward flew to Los Angeles and was met at the airport by members of Gruwell's original class of students – the real people, not the actors – who accompanied her to the conference centre in Anaheim.

On the first day of conference, teachers from all over the world met and began their first activity. Forward was paired up with Darrius Garrett, one of the original Freedom Writers and author of the memoir, *Diary of a Freedom Writer*. The two began to work on a personal Coat of Arms, a shield divided into four parts – My Goals, People I Admire, My Likes and Things That Are Unique About Me. Encouraging each other, Forward and Garrett cut out photos from magazines for the four categories and then, at the bottom of the shield, wrote their personal motto. Forward's was three words: Never Give Up!

Freedom Writers group

"As I worked with Darrius," said Forward, "I realized how powerful and fun that an introspective activity can be. I felt a surge of excitement about sharing it with my students in Mistissini. Over the week of intense learning activities, I learned many respectful ways students could get to know more about themselves as individuals. I already knew that each student is valued and important – and I could see how these fun activities could bring out their special, unique features and celebrate them.

"At the end of the conference, I felt so close with all of my new friends. On our last morning, we teachers gathered in the hotel lobby with our packed bags, most of us in tears, not because we were going home to our loved ones, but because we couldn't continue to be together. It was a great comfort to know my new friends would never be farther than a Facebook page away – a constant conversation that continues every day. That morning, I was given a small pin by Erin Gruwell, and looking at it every day I am inspired to the work of a Freedom Writer, namely, sharing experience to better humanity.

"Universality of experience begins in one classroom and fans out to include every classroom in the world. We're writing across continents, one freedom story at a time," said Forward.

And now, here's a surprise for all regional teachers of the Cree School Board. Waiting for you in each of your school libraries, are copies of *Freedom Writers* and Gruwell's memoir, T*each With Your Heart*. Forward invites teachers to visit the Freedom Writers' website (*www.freedomwriterfoundation.org*) for lesson plans, animated activities and incentives.

CREE HOCKEY NEWS & NOTES

Rising Stars

Cree hockey players to watch for this season

Story and photos by Daniel Coyle

It may still feel like summer outside, but don't let that fool you. With junior hockey and Midget AAA training camps opening across the country in mid-August, hockey season is upon us once again.

Cree hockey is well represented this season at all levels, from minor hockey to the pros, and Cree players are getting noticed. Here is a brief list of some of the players you will be hearing about this season.

Deverick Ottereyes of the Charlottetown Islanders

Deverick Ottereyes

Charlottetown Islanders, QMJHL

Waswanipi's Deverick Ottereyes returns to PEI for his third season in the QMJHL with the Charlottetown Islanders. The eighth-round pick played his Midget AAA hockey in Amos and has developed into a steady two-way centre. Islanders' coach Gordie Dwyer expects big things from Ottereyes this season.

"He will be one of our leaders this year," said Dwyer, during an interview with the Nation. "Each year, Deverick has taken on more responsibility, and this year we'd like to see him play a more offensive role."

Ottereyes has yet to see pre-season game action, but his job with the Islanders is secure.

"We've used the first couple games to get a look at some young kids, and players we need to make decisions on," explained Dwyer.

"Deverick definitely has a job with the Islanders this season."

Cody Petawabano

Lac St-Louis Lions, Quebec Midget AAA Developmental League

The youngest player on this list, 16-year-old Cody Petawabano of Mistissini just completed his first QMJHL camp in Chicoutimi after being selected 49th overall in this year's QMJHL entry draft.

Petawabano impressed in pre-season action, picking up one assist in two pre-season games, before being cut by the team.

"Cody is a young kid, who did very well at camp," said Chicoutimi coach Patrice Bosch. "He is a big boy, has lots of skill and is very coachable."

"We just felt that he needed another year to dominate at the Midget AAA level. I don't see any reason why he won't be back in Chicoutimi next season."

Alex, Brett and Christopher Hester

La Tuque Wolves, LHJAAAQ

It will be a family affair in La Tuque, as three members of Waskaganish's Hester clan join the Midget AAA Wolves.

Alex Hester heads to La Tuque after participating in training camp with the QMJHL Val-d'Or Foreurs, where he shined in exhibition games, but was the Foreurs' final cut at camp.

"Alex has a bright future," said coach Mario Durocher. "He has all the tools, and we expect him to be in Val-d'Or next season, if not sooner."

Alex is following in the steps of his older brother Brett, who made his mark in Val-d'Or last season with his gritty style of play and timely scoring. Although still eligible to play in the QMJHL, Brett declined to participate in the Foreurs camp this month, instead opting to join La Tuque to play with his young brother.

"There aren't a lot of jobs available for 20-year-olds in the QMJHL," said Charles J. Hester, the players' father. "Typically, those spots are taken by players who have been drafted (by an NHL team). Brett had a lot of offers to play in Quebec and Ontario, but decided he wanted to play with Alex."

Coach Durocher thinks that may be a good thing for 18-year-old Alex.

"Alex is a more skilled player than Brett, but we'd like to see him have some of Brett's edge in his game," explained Durocher.

Their cousin Christopher will join the Hester brothers. The 18-year-old is making his AAA debut alongside his cousins after spending the 2012-2013 lining up on left-wing with the Waskaganish Bears AA.

Silas Neeposh

Collège Français de Longueuil, LHJAAAQ

Silas Neeposh is among the most travelled young hockey players you may ever meet. The smooth-skating defenceman from Mistissini patrolled the blueline for a number of Junior and Midget teams in Ontario and Quebec before finally getting his opportunity last season with the Chicoutimi Sagueneens and Val-d'Or Foreurs of the QMJHL.

But as a 20-year-old, Neeposh faces the same job shortage as Brett Hester, and has opted to return to Midget AAA this season in Longueuil.

Silas Neeposh

"Silas is a smart kid and a highly skilled defenceman," said Patrice Bosch, the new coach of the Sagueneens, who also coached Neeposh at Midget AAA Kahnawake in 2011.

"He will have an immediate impact on that team's defence."

Synee Coonishish

We don't yet know exactly where 18-year-old Synee Coonishish will be playing this year. But, that isn't for lack of opportunities.

After representing Mistissini in the first season of the APTN hockey reality TV show, Hit the Ice, Coonishish opted to stay close to home to play hockey last season. He was recently released after a strong training camp with the Wellington Dukes of the Ontario Junior Hockey League; a victim of a numbers game after the Dukes signed five centres and four left-wingers during the off-season. While the Dukes would like to keep Coonishish within reach as an affiliate, social-media buzz indicates that the Temiscaming Titans of the NOJHL would like to sign Coonishish for the upcoming season.

Michael Ferland

Calgary Flames, NHL

The product of Swan River, Manitoba will be attending his second NHL training camp in September with a lot to prove. Drafted by Calgary in the 5th round in 2010, Ferland had a breakthrough season in 2011-2012 with the WHL Brandon Wheat Kings, and the future looked bright.

But legal issues and a less-than-stellar training camp landed Ferland back in the Juniors last season where he spent time with a Saskatoon Blades team that disappointed; first by their early exit from WHL playoff action, and then by a poor showing as hosts of the 2013 Memorial Cup. Ferland, however, was one of the positives in that tournament for the Blades, which bodes well for the young winger as he seeks to take the next step in his hockey career.

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Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou/Eenou Istchee)
Grand conseil des Cris (Eeyou/Eenou Istchee)

Back to school message from the Grand Chief Dr. Matthew Coon Come and Deputy Grand Chief Rodney Mark

Grand Chief's
Message to Parents:

We have all accepted a mission. That mission is to create a healthy and prosperous Cree Nation. We all have a role to play in the success of our mission--especially our Youth. It will be up to our Cree Youth to obtain the education and the skills to carry our Nation into a new world of opportunities. So we must all do what we can to encourage and inspire our Youth.

We parents are the first teachers of our children and our job as parents is to instill in our children a love of learning. We must explain to them how school can extend their learning outside our homes, and how exciting and meaningful this learning can be.

Through guidance and reminders, we as parents can help our children organize their time and support their desires to learn new things in school.

Our attitudes about education can inspire our children and show them how to take charge of their own educational journey so that they can be fulfilled in their own lives while making a contribution to our Nation.

Meegwetch.

Grand Chief Dr. Matthew Coon Come

Deputy Grand chief's
Message to the students:

Education is not just about giving you a job, it's about giving you an awesome adventure. Make some goals for yourself this coming year in school--for your education, for your health and of course have FUN. Please remember to:

- treat yourself with the highest regard because no one is going to do it for you.
- work hard because no one is going to do that for you.
- have FUN because no one is going to do that for you.
- believe in yourself your greatness is waiting for you.

Be Cool! Be Awesome!
Be Kind! Be Silly!

Deputy Grand Chief Rodney Mark

Confronting racism

Anti-Native sentiment is spreading in both social and traditional media

By Jesse Staniforth

It seems to be happening everywhere. Whether in anonymous attacks on Twitter and in website comments, in semi-public forums like Facebook, or in signed letters and columns in mainstream newspapers, public expressions of anti-Aboriginal racism are appearing on a more regular basis. It's gotten so bad that most people think carefully before subjecting themselves to the comments section of any news about First Nations issues.

In a widely circulated post on her blog âpihtawikosisân, Montreal Métis educator Chelsea Vowel discussed and critiqued a list of ill-informed letters and columns published in various Canadian newspapers. They repeated old stereotypes about Indigenous people as lazy and corrupt, or claimed that Indigenous nations are unable to survive in "the modern world."

Notable among these outlets is the Calgary *Herald*, which greeted the class-action lawsuit filed against the federal government in British Columbia over the '60s Scoop with an outrageous piece by columnist Karen Klassen. She argued Native children were taken away from their families out of "love" and implied it was necessary because Aboriginal families were too uncivilized to care for their children properly.

Disturbing as these stories are, their apparent frequency now doesn't necessarily mean racism against First Nations is growing, said Moose Cree lawyer and Fulbright Scholar Charlene Desrochers. It might simply mean that people are becoming more comfortable expressing racist ideas they've always held.

"I think with the onset of the internet, the racism is coming more to the forefront, and we're seeing it more," Desrochers said. "Whereas before it was more individual-focused – you know, you're walking down the street in a small town and somebody calls you a savage. But with the internet, you see it everywhere. The internet has made it more accessible."

Desrochers, who hails from Constance Lake First Nation and now practices law in Ottawa, is an active voice for Native rights on Twitter. She said she sees the growing wave of racism as systemic. Vowel, in her post, argued that this racism is largely the result of a version of Canadian history that erases First Nations and the atrocities committed against them. But Desrochers says it's also the product of the federal government's desire for land and resources.

"In order to get at the resources and the land," she said, "you have to oppress the people who own it, Indigenous people. If you're going to oppress the people, how do you do it? Through racism and assimilation. The main racist piece is the Indian Act, which is designed to kill the Indian. How do you kill the Indian? You legislate their lives, and then you allow the media and people to be racist."

The aggressive anti-Aboriginal attitude appearing on social media commentary and in newspapers is simply an expression of the country's underlying colonial design, Desrochers argued.

"If your government is founded on racist principles, the racism is going to be allowed to flow. And if the government's not going to take responsibility for that racism, it's going to continue."

Governmental contempt for Indigenous culture is reflected in the media, she said, and absorbed by the populace. "Colonizers are just developing new tools of oppression as time goes by. So the federal government right now is not saying outright that we're useless and dysfunctional, but they're allowing the media to do it."

At the heart of Desrochers' criticisms is her belief that leadership has failed on all levels, from the band council to the provincial and federal levels.

"The Indian Act chiefs need to take their role in responsibility – yes, society is inflicting racism upon us, but our leaders are not defending us," she said. "I'm not saying all chiefs are corrupt – far from it. But the only way to combat racism is for the federal government, the provincial government, and the Indian Act leaders to take responsibility for their actions. All three of them have a share of responsibility to combat racism. So treating Indigenous people better – if [leaders] start treating us better, mainstream society will treat us better as well."

But Desrochers also supports substantial changes in education from Junior

> "**I THINK WITH THE ONSET OF THE INTERNET, THE RACISM IS COMING MORE TO THE FOREFRONT**, AND WE'RE SEEING IT MORE. WHEREAS BEFORE IT WAS MORE INDIVIDUAL-FOCUSED – YOU KNOW, YOU'RE WALKING DOWN THE STREET IN A SMALL TOWN AND SOMEBODY CALLS YOU A SAVAGE. BUT WITH THE INTERNET, YOU SEE IT EVERYWHERE. THE INTERNET HAS MADE IT MORE ACCESSIBLE."
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CREE NATION OF WEMINDJI

2013 GENERAL ELECTION

The **General Election** will be held at the **Band Office** - Upstairs Conference Room, on **Thursday, September 12, 2013** **from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

NOMINATIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF CHIEF

NAMES OF NOMINEES:
Dennis Georgekish, Edward Georgekish, Clarence Tomatuk, Danny Tomatuk.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF DEPUTY CHIEF

NAMES OF NOMINEES:
Frank Atsynia, Holly Danyluk, Johnny Mark.

NOMINATIONS FOR COUNCILLORS

NAMES OF NOMINEES:
Frederick Asquabaneskum, Carmen Faries, Bradley A.J. Georgekish, Elmer Georgekish, Joseph Georgekish, Ida Gilpin, Arita Mark, John Mark, Thomas Mark, Mary Shashaweskum, Stanley Shashaweskum, Ernest Tomatuk.

For more information, please contact:
Christine Kakabat
Returning Officer
2013 General Election
Cree Nation of Wemindji
Tel.: 819-978-0264 ext. 221 or 233

"MORE AND MORE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE, BECAUSE OF THEIR EDUCATION, THEY KNOW WHAT'S RIGHT AND WRONG AND THEY'RE ADAMANT IN STANDING UP ON THAT ISSUE. NOWADAYS, THE GENERATION IS CHANGING. OURS SAYS, 'DON'T MESS WITH US. IF YOU DO, WE KNOW THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM.'"

CREE NATION YOUTH GRAND CHIEF JOSHUA ISERHOFF

Kindergarten on up, as well as public anti-racism campaigns and commercials from all political parties. She underlines that forums like Twitter don't encourage people to spend time reading, so she hopes that we will soon see short-form videos of the history of Indigenous cultures, colonization and racism that internet users can link to when they encounter racist discussions online.

"Everybody's on the internet now and people don't like to read four or five pages of blogs," she said. "Many Indigenous people are educated, but even for the average Joe and Mary who aren't, a 40-second, two-minute, five-minute clip on the history of Indigenous peoples can help them too."

Cree Nation Youth Grand Chief Joshua Iserhoff recognized the heightened visibility of anti-Aboriginal racism.

"[It's been happening more] ever since Idle No More," he said. "When you make some kind of a statement, or are against something and ruffle some feathers – nobody likes change. Of course you'll get a lot of backlash, criticism and accusations. That's what First Nations, especially the youth, are facing."

Iserhoff related the challenge of racism to the recent movie *The Butler*, about a character that is a first-hand witness to many events of the black civil rights struggle in the United States. The movie, he pointed out, could just as easily have been about Aboriginal struggles.

Like African-Americans in the US, Aboriginal people "were spat on and killed. There was a similarity in that movie that I was totally drawn to. I got the sense that a story has to be told from our perspective, the Native First Nations. We've gone through the same thing, through the course of the genocide that happened in the past. And there's a Black History Month, but I wish there was an Aboriginal Month."

But with characteristic optimism, Iserhoff said he thinks things are better now than they were in the past, even when it comes to fighting racism. Young people most frequently encounter racism, he said, when they're studying or working in the south, surrounded by white people.

"They'll get some racial slurs, but it's nothing they can't handle," he said. "The Cree are very different in how they handle things. It goes to show the power of our leadership as well."

Iserhoff said Cree youth, like young people in other nations, are growing in education at the same time as they're growing in number, and are technologically engaged – a claim that the success of the Twitter-born Idle No More movement supports.

"They know how to use media," he said, "and they know how to change the situation when it's getting worse. They keep looking ahead, never losing their vision. More and more Aboriginal people, because of their education, they know what's right and wrong and they're adamant in standing up on that issue. Nowadays, the generation is changing. Ours says, 'Don't mess with us. If you do, we know the judicial system.'"

Iserhoff cautioned young people who encounter racism to maintain their dignity. "For my part," he said, "I tell young people, don't ever go as low as anybody that treats you like garbage. Don't stoop to their level."

There's an important distinction between criticism and injustice, Iserhoff said, and when it comes to criticism – particularly of the abusive sort – his advice was to leave it alone.

"Don't ever answer your critics. Keep your eyes on the prize as a human being with much potential. I used to be called 'kawish' ('dirty Indian'), back in the '80s, but I knew who I was. So I didn't bother to even answer them or call them names. I learned to be silent, and I tell young people that. Learn to be silent with your critics. But if you do see injustice, speak out."

Desrochers takes racist slurs more seriously, though, and said it takes strength whether she encounters a racist person on the internet or a racist judge in a courtroom where she's trying a case. Her response is prayer.

"I'm a spiritual person," she said. "I go to church. I do a lot of praying, and I find that really helps."

Spirituality is both a tool for healing and a gesture of resistance to colonization, she said, noting that the residential school system deliberately destroyed Aboriginal spiritual traditions.

"In terms of other people who don't go to church, that's where they need to look at their spiritual life," Desrochers said. "It's up to the individual what type of faith they want to practice, but it's your spiritual life that's going to get you through the physical and emotional abuses, like racism, that are afflicted upon us on a daily basis. They attack your spirituality and tell you you're worthless. So I pray. You have to have faith in something, to get you through all these abuses."

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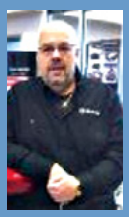

To all the students of the Cree Communities: Have a great year, believe in yourselves, and never give up! You are the future of your Elders, and the future of Eeyou Istchee.

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By Amy German

The hard truth about soft drinks

Study suggests drinking pop contributes to bad behaviour in childhood

While most people know that soft drinks are not a healthy beverage choice, a University of Columbia study now suggests that these beverages may induce violent, withdrawn and distracted behaviour in children as young as five.

The study – written by researchers Shakira F. Suglia, Sara Solnick and David Hemenway – was recently published in the US-based *Journal of Pediatrics*. It discusses how five-year-olds were two times more likely to exhibit violent behaviour and have trouble concentrating after consuming four or more servings of cola.

While there have been other studies that have looked at the negative impacts of carbonated sodas on children, this was the first of its kind to study such a large sample of young children – nearly 3,000 five-year-old children from cities across the US.

While they caution that more study needs to be done, their findings are startling:

"We found significant relationships between soda consumption with the overall measure of aggression and with the three specific behaviours that we consider most indicative of aggression: destroying things belonging to others, getting into fights, and physically attacking people," they wrote.

Children who consumed the highest quantities of soda also were more likely to exhibit attention problems and withdrawal behaviour.

The Cree Board of Health and Social Services discourages consumption of beverages with high sugar and caffeine content.

"Soft drinks are something that I like to call empty nutrient drinks because they have a lot of sugar. While they do provide a lot of energy, there is no other nutritional benefit," said CBHSS dietician Sonia Lu.

Lu says that because a five-year-old has such a small stomach, it is important to make every calorie count, packing it with the most nutrition as possible. Most people, large or small, shouldn't consume more than 13 teaspoons of sugar per day, according to the Dieticians of Canada website. But there are other factors in cola to consider.

"It is reasonable to make that correlation given that in the study those children had a lot of soft drinks so I am thinking that they were definitely over the limit for the amount of sugar and the caffeine content. And, like I mentioned before, too much caffeine is known to have behavioural effects," said Lu. "The daily recommended dose of caffeine set out by Health Canada for children according to their age groups states that a child should not exceed one or two 355 ml cans of cola per day."

As this study suggests, cola can affect a child's behaviour and their ability to concentrate, soft drinks are discouraged before or during the school day.

> "WE FOUND SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SODA CONSUMPTION WITH THE OVERALL MEASURE OF AGGRESSION."

Lu did say that the occasional single serving of soda for a young child might be okay as a treat, if you are looking to see your child excel in school, a better choice might be water or milk, served with a nutritious breakfast.

"Children should have a healthy breakfast because they will be more likely to get the nutrients they need if they start out this way each day. I tell parents to aim for at least three of the four food groups per meal each day. For example, children could have oatmeal prepared with milk," said Lu.

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UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

Cellphones have changed my world

by Xavier Kataquapit

Cellphones are a big part of our lives these days. Although the technology is rather young it is probably true that most of us would be lost without our cellphones. I recall first-generation cellphones in the early 1990s. In remote Attawapiskat, we were so far removed from modern technology that we only saw these new phones on television. They are often referred to as bricks, and for good reason, because they were huge and heavy plastic rectangular cubes that people lugged around to enable this new form of instant communication. They were considered portable but they were not very practical and certainly could not fit in a pocket or purse.

These early phones were expensive to purchase unless you bought one on a plan. The first thing the cellphone business people set up was a way to sell the phone at a low price and then trap users into expensive rate plans. I know a friend who has some horror stories about those early cellphones as he ran up bills that were in excess of $1,400 a month. They were also deemed to be unsafe to a degree considering that research showed that there might be a possibility that the electromagnetic radiation used in the microwave range could be carcinogenic. Although, the phones have been modernized and are now small and compact with weaker production of waves they still are considered a risk to health over long-term use. As a matter of fact in 2011 the World Health Organization decided that long-term use could be considered a health risk and carcinogenic hazard.

When I got into cellphones in the late 1990s they had diminished in size but were still limited in range because the cell-tower system across the country was not as extensive as it is now, particularly in the far north. It was still a big treat to call someone while walking along the street, moving about in traffic and enjoying a meal in my favourite restaurant. A few short years late, it seemed that everyone had a cellphone. The streets, buses, malls and even those driving at highway speeds had become constant chatterbugs. The world had changed.

The technology started out with a very limited 1G network that restricted cellphone use to a few areas in major cities or towns. Then it increased to 2G when more towers were built and cellphones could be used more extensively and while in transit. Next, it went to 3G, where the cell-tower signal networks really developed and so did the phone technology.

My first phones were really useful for phone calls but not much more. Then I moved up to a newer model that allowed me limited access the internet. That was very cool but not always easy or possible depending on where I was located and the level of signal access. More recently, I have enjoyed what are now called smartphones, which are more like mini computers. Smartphone technology is available in all sorts of gadgets including iPads, a variety of tablets and an array of tiny phones with big screens. They offer all kinds of possibilities with added accessories and applications. If you have a smartphone you can set up your mini computer just about anywhere.

One of the most popular pastimes to develop in the cellular era is texting. People can inexpensively communicate with each other by just typing words onto the screen and sending it off to be read and replied to. Texting has gone crazy and just about everywhere I go I am surrounded by people texting each other and often in the same room. They are not bothering to communicate the old-fashioned way by talking; they seem to prefer the silent plunk of little keys to keep in touch. It can be a little frustrating for people who are not into this technology to this degree. Most texters I know are under 40. Teens seem addicted to this mode of communication.

I really do love my android smartphone, but at times I am very content to put it aside and just read a book or take a walk on a wilderness trail. My love of the wilderness draws me to some very out-of-the-way places and that dictates that I have to leave my device behind because the signal is too weak. People who want to contact me are frustrated at these times, but it allows me the necessary withdrawal from a hectic and anxiety-ridden world. Time to put another log on the campfire.

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Health and Sexuality Resources Center: 1-888-855-7432 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) (www.criss.org)

Gay Helpline: 1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal: 1-866-403-4688 (www.nwsm.info)

Suicide Action Québec:
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Residential School Survivors: A 24 hour toll-free crisis line is available to provide immediate emotional assistance and can be reached 24-hours a day, seven days a week: 1-866-925-4419. Other support services and information for survivors is available on the AFN website at: www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources

Concordia University, Montreal:
The Centre for Native Education has changed its name to the Aboriginal Student Resource Centre (ASRC). The new name is inclusive of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis students the centre serves and recognizes its role as a resource for the Concordia community. For any further details contact: aboriginalcentre@concordia.ca or 514-848-2424 ext. 7327.

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A presentation of The Board of Compensation and the Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Company

Talking about Cree workers within CCDC

Wachiya. Can you tell us about the Cree Jobs Partnership?
The Cree Job Parternship (CJP) was part of Canada's Economic Action Plan and the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) to provide Canadians with better job opportunities. CJP was created to train Cree beneficiaries for jobs in the construction, catering, and aviation industries. The entities involved in making this possible were CHRD (Cree Human Resources Development), the Cree School Board, and CREECO. CCDC, Gestion ADC and Air Creebec were also part of the program.

Who funded the program?
Emploi Quebec and the ASEP (Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership) provided the funding. The total cost of the original two-year project was $41.2 million and the federal and provincial governments agreed to fund $17.9 million. The balance was paid in kind by the companies who gave the training.

How long was the project?
The original agreement between the federal and provincial governments and the Cree entities was for two years. After the completion of the project 301 jobs were supposed to be created for Cree workers. They ended up with a one-year extension, ending in 2012, which enabled more specialized training programs and a total of 665 long-term jobs. The program has not been renewed.

The CJP posted the results for the 3-year program. Can you tell us some of their numbers?
In all three industries, 781 Cree were trained in all of our companies and joint ventures. More women joined the program in the third year. At the end of it 65 people received a DEP Diploma from a combination of skills they already had and the courses they took with the CJP.

What types of courses did they take to qualify for jobs?
The training was done in the communities and on-the-job. In construction most of the training was in carpentry, heavy machinery operation, truck driving, and crusher operations. In ADC, cooking and food service courses were given as well as janitorial training. Most of the successful trainees now work for ADC, CCDC or in one of our joint ventures.

How many Cree workers does CCDC employ?
The number of workers depends on how many contracts we have in a given year. In 2010 we had 300 to 350 Cree employees in all areas of the company and in our joint ventures; they worked construction in the field and in our offices, in food services and in janitorial services. With these training courses in the CJP we had the opportunity to hire qualified Cree workers

Can you tell us how much CCDC has paid in salaries for Cree workers?
A total of $133 Million has been paid since 2003, with $33 million of that in the last 3 years. It shows that we have more Cree workers qualifying for specialty jobs in construction and they are making excellent salaries.

Why did Cree beneficiaries sign up for this type of training?
The CCDC objective is to have our workers qualified to work both on- and off-reserve. We've had some people working for us for many years without certification but they aren't able to work for other non-Cree companies. Being certified through CJP gives them more opportunities.

I would like to mention that even though CBCC, our joint venture in Chisasibi, was not eligible because of the criteria set out by the Cree Job partnership during the first year of the program, we (CBCC) still trained over 100 construction workers! It is with this kind of commitment that we continue to open the industry to our Cree employees.

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